



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

*right of suffrage at all.* In times of high party feeling, there is no such thing as free and conscientious choice of rulers. Prerogative never shielded its favourites and its creatures from all censure and all scrutiny, so completely as *party* has done it. The theoretical doctrine of the English constitution, that the king can do no wrong, is not more true than the practical doctrine of republics, in times of contention, that the head of a party can do no wrong.

Let it be considered, too, that although some good men may be willing to take office, for the sake of the publick, there will be many struggling for it, from motives of gain and selfishness. The first will be most competent, but the last most assiduous. The first will labour to prepare themselves for office; the others will labour to prepare office for themselves. And while the frequency and the tumult of elections discourage publick spirit, and wear out patriotism, they will in no degree abate the eagerness of self-interest, or mitigate the fury of party.

These then are the evils which threaten the duration of our government, and against which all the well-meaning and all the wise should unite their efforts: the assiduity and impudence of office-seekers—the licentiousness of the *Press*; the abuse and perversion of the right of suffrage; and above all, that violence of party spirit, which has shewed itself in the hands of demagogues, the most tremendous engine of mischief ever wielded against the liberties of a free people.

---

*Journal of a voyage up the River Missouri; performed in 1811, by H. M. Brackenridge, Esq. second edition, revised and enlarged by the author.—Baltimore, Coats & Maxwell, 1816. 12mo. pp. 246.*

THOSE who are fond of travels which lead through new and wild regions, will derive much gratification from this tour of Mr. Brackenridge. The important expedition of Lewis and Clark, first gave us some insight into the vast, unexplored territory which lies between the mouth of the Missouri, and that of the Columbia. Several trading expeditions have since followed the same, or nearly the same route. The settlements are already advanced some hundreds of miles up the Missouri, and are rapidly increasing;

and we have little doubt when we consider the spirit of dauntless and incessant enterprise which exists in this country, that the passage across the Rocky Mountains will every year become more frequent, that there will ere long be a town on the banks of the Columbia, and that in twenty years from this period, a communication between New-Orleans and Canton, will exist without having recourse to the Atlantick Ocean. It will be incomparably less arduous, than the intercourse which is carried on between Pekin and St. Petersburg by means of caravans. A company engaged in the fur-trade, had established a factory on the Columbia, and called the place *Astoria*, from the name of a merchant in New-York, who had a principal concern in the enterprise; this undertaking was interrupted by the late war, and abandoned. We do not know if it has been since resumed.

The Missouri, from the description of Mr. Brackenridge, waters a fertile country, well wooded, for the last six hundreds of miles of its course. Compact settlements will hardly extend beyond this distance from its mouth, though for some hundred miles further, its banks are formed at intervals of rich prairies, and fringed with wood chiefly of the cotton tree and willow; the streams that enter into it, present the same appearances. This region may afford pasturage to extensive flocks of tame animals, as it does now to wild ones, buffaloes, deer, &c. Above, it becomes more dreary and desert till it reaches the Rocky Mountains, and can never have any other inhabitants than the few that may exist at certain stations along the rivers. The climate of this latter region is intensely severe in winter. The country, destitute of trees and of water, except in the rivers, broken into hills, washed into a thousand fantastick shapes by the rains at particular seasons, which form torrents to swell the floods of the Missouri. It combines within its frightful and extensive territory the Steppes of Tartary, and the moving sands of the African deserts.

The Missouri itself in its long course receives several rivers of great magnitude, such as the *Platte*, the *Chienne*, the *White River*, the *Osage*, besides numerous streams of less importance. With the aid of these tributaries, it rolls such an immense flood of water, filled with earth, trees, &c. into the Mississippi, as fully accounts for the alluvial deposits which form the banks of that river, and gradually

advance them into the Gulph of Mexico. It appears that the banks of the Missouri are seldom guarded by rocks, against the encroachments of the current. They are formed almost wholly of clay and loose earth, and are constantly giving way and falling in, with all the trees that grow upon them. Numerous and shifting obstructions are created to the navigation in this way. Islands of sand, earth and floating trees are continually forming and wearing away, the consequent impediments to ascending, in addition to the rapid current, are very great. The river in some places, is contracted to a width of less than three hundred yards, in other expands to more than two miles. Mr. B. with a party who had powerful motives for the most ardent and unremitted exertion, was sixty-two days in getting to Cedar island, seventy miles above the White River, and twelve hundred from the mouth of the Missouri. On returning, the voyage from the Arikara villages to St. Louis, fourteen hundred and forty miles, was accomplished in fourteen days. The farthest point to which the author proceeded was a station of the Missouri Fur Company, forty miles above the Mandan Villages, and sixteen hundred and forty miles from the mouth of the river.

Mr. Brackenridge informs us, that he did not keep this journal with a view to publication; but after publishing another work entitled, "*Views of Louisiana*," his friends suggested a wish that he would print this work. These circumstances exempt it in some degree from rigid criticism, but even if they did not, we should speak favourably of it. Were it subject to our revision, there are few sentences we might strike out, and there are some verbal corrections, probably errors of the press, to be made. The author makes no pretensions to science, and had no instruments with him to make observations in any of its branches. His tour was undertaken from mere curiosity to visit these wild and remote regions, and from a love of the adventures and excitement they might afford. Under the influence of these motives, he narrates what he saw in his route. His description of the Indians, and of such scenery as he could see from the banks of the river, for he was seldom able to stray far from it, are given with animation, and will repay for the trouble of perusal. We shall now follow the au-

thor in his course, and after noticing what was most remarkable, make a few extracts, that our readers may form a better opinion of the work.

After the expedition of Messrs. Lewis and Clark, several individuals formed a commercial enterprise, under the name of the *Missouri Fur Company*.—A considerable capital was engaged in the undertaking, and several stations for the purpose of trade were established in the upper regions of the Missouri. Various disasters attended this company, and destroyed its resources. An attempt to recover something induced Mr. Lisa, a Spaniard by birth, of whose skill and energy the author speaks in very high terms, to determine on ascending the river, to visit their stations, taking with them some articles for trading with the Indians. Their boat was furnished with sails, and the party consisted of twenty-five men, Canadian boatmen and American hunters. Another party under the conduct of a Mr. Hunt, whose destination was to the mouth of the Columbia, had started three weeks before. These two leaders were jealous of, and feared each other. Each believed that the other could engage particular tribes of Indians over whom they had influence, to interrupt and stop them. Under this impression Lisa's exertions to overtake the other party were extreme, and he therefore probably ascended the river in the shortest time it is possible to do it, except with the aid of steam.

They left St. Charles on the 2nd of April, 1811, when the March floods had begun to subside. Among the party was a Frenchman with his wife, an Indian woman, who had accompanied Lewis and Clark in their expedition. She belonged to the Snake nation. He describes her as "a good creature, of a mild and gentle disposition, greatly attached to the whites, whose manner and dress she tries to imitate, but she had become sickly, and longed to revisit her native country. Her husband also, who had spent many years among the Indians, had become weary of a civilized life."

The charm of an existence in these wild regions must be powerful to outweigh the hardships which the hunters have to undergo; and there are few situations, where the toil would be so great and the food meaner, than among the Canadian boatmen. Mr. B. thus describes them: "In the course of this evening, I had as much cause to admire the

dexterity of our Canadians and Creoles, as I had before to condemn their frivolity. I believe an American could not be brought to support with patience, the fatiguing labours and submission which these men endure. At this season, when the water is exceedingly cold, they leap in without a moments' hesitation. Their food consists of fried corn homony for breakfast, a slice of fat pork and biscuit for dinner, and a pot of mush, with a pound of tallow in it, for supper. Yet this is better than their common fare ; but we were about to make an extraordinary voyage, and the additional expense, was not regarded."

Three hundred miles from the mouth of the river they came to Fort Osage. This is a triangular one, built on a point where the river forms an elbow, on a bluff about one hundred feet above the water, and commanding a view of the stream for several miles in each direction. The fort is a station where a factor resides for the Indian trade. It is garrisoned by only a company of men. The Osages had a village immediately under it, but were going to remove to a prairie about three miles above it. These Indians are described as differing in many points from the natives eastward of the Mississippi. They all crowded out to see the arrival of the strangers, and discovered as much eager curiosity, as the others do apparent indifference, at the sight of any thing new. They are extremely filthy in their habits, but have at least one good trait, they have never shed the blood of a white man. Their buildings are of a circular form, made by placing matts of course rushes over poles. They have a practice in the morning of setting up a general howl—this has been supposed to be a sort of worship that they offer to the evil spirit. The first man who wakes in the morning, if he recollects the loss of some friend or favourite horse, or dog, sets up this howl. At this signal every man, woman and child, and a thousand dogs join in the cry, and according to Mr. B. more "lugubrious and infernal wailings never proceeded from Pandemonium itself." A few miles from Fort Osage they passed a small encampment of American hunters. "Three men were sitting before a fire on the edge of a bank in the midst of the rushes, having trodden them down for a few yards around. Upon three slender forks, a few pieces of bark were placed, which together with the boughs of the poplar afforded

some little shelter from the rain. The remains of a deer were suspended to a tree, and several skins were stretched out with the fleshy sides to the fire, for the purpose of being dried. The Missouri is now what the Ohio was once, the *Paradise of Hunters*. The upper part of the river is still more pleasant, on account of the openness of the plains, and the greater facility of pursuing the wild animals, which exist in numbers almost incredible."—They had now passed the last settlement of the whites. On the forty-first day of their voyage they passed the river Platte, above which commences what is termed the Upper Missouri. This makes a point of the voyage, and it answers the same purpose to the boatmen that the equinoctial line does to the sailors. Those who have never passed it before must contribute in different ways to a frolick. This river takes its rise in the same chain of mountains with the Missouri, the Rio del Norte, and the Colorado of California. Its course is through an open country like the first of these, and runs about two thousand miles, and is six hundred yards wide at its mouth. Above this, the country assumed a different appearance, much more open, yet still presenting an agreeable aspect.

Considerable life is given to this journal by the anxiety (and with which the reader naturally sympathizes,) that was felt by the author and his friends to overtake the party of Hunt that was before them. He mentions two bends of the river, one of fifteen, the other of twelve miles round, as the channel formerly run, but the neck being only a few hundred yards across, the stream had forced its way through and made a new channel, by which all this distance was saved. In this neighbourhood is a remarkable object called Blackbird hill, near which the river is so very winding, that after going thirty miles from where it is first met, the hill is still near the river. The hill rises between four and five hundred feet in height, and bears this name from a very distinguished Chief of the Mahas, who is buried on the top of it, according to his own directions, sitting erect on horseback. His reason for this was, that he might see the traders as they ascended and descended. This Chief was as famous among his tribes as Bajazet or Tamerlane; and was obeyed with servile fear and adoration. This arose from his having obtained from a trader some arsenick, which he administered secretly to the victims he had denounced, and in this way, inspired the whole country with terror.

On the 23d of May they passed Vermillion Creek, and near this some rapids "sufficient to appal the stoutest heart"—the water had risen to its utmost height, the current "uniformly rapid, in some places, rolling with the most furious and terrific violence." In these rapids, where the stream was much compressed by a projecting bluff, "the middle of the river appeared several feet higher than the sides." The height of the water, enabled frequently to cut off points, which saved them a considerable distance. The author here remarks on the trees, (oaks and ashes) which were twenty inches in diameter, having the appearance of orchards from their being so low; a decisive proof this of the elevation of these plains. The next day they passed the Burning Bluffs. Here were large masses of pumice, a fragment of a hill composed entirely of it, marks of ignition every where, but no other volcanick appearances. Met a small party descending with a parcel of furs, from whom they learnt, that with the exception of the Mandan and Arikara nations, all the others were extremely hostile, and the danger of passing through their borders made their situation a gloomy one. In this neighbourhood he saw the first Buffaloe, a large bull of terrific mein and size, who eyed them fiercely for some minutes from a high bank, and then trotted off to join his mate. At this season of the year the males always go in pairs, a singular fact in the history of this animal. He here mentions a plain without wood, the bank rises from the river thirty or forty feet, as if regularly sodded, and the view was terminated only by the horizon. The hunters told him that this plain extended in the same way a hundred miles. On the twenty-sixth they passed *L'isle a bon homme*, where there are the remains of an ancient fortification. The plains were here covered with the marks of the buffaloe. They were now in the vicinity where they anticipated great danger from the bands of the Sioux, notwithstanding the danger, the author could not help wandering with his rifle some distance from the banks, and thus describes the country. "The scenery this evening (26th of May) is beautiful beyond any thing I ever beheld. In spite of every injunction to the contrary, I could not help wandering a few miles from the boat. The sky as clear, as that represented in Chinese painting. The face of the country enchanting. The



flowery mead, the swelling ground, the romantick hill, the bold river, the winding rivulet, the groves, the shrubberies, all disposed and arranged in the most exquisite manner. No idea can be conveyed to the mind, but by recurring to one which would be as sad, as this is pleasing. Suppose for a moment, the most beautiful parts of France or Italy should at once be divested of their population, and with it their dwellings and every vestige of human existence, that nothing but the silent plains and a few solitary groves and thickets should remain, there would then be some resemblance to the scenery of the Missouri ; though the contemplation would produce grief instead of pleasure. Yet even here, I could not but feel as if there existed a painful void, something wanting, a melancholy stillness reigns over the interminable waste, no animated beings,

———scarce an insect moves  
Its filmy wing—and o'er the plain nought breathes  
But scowling blasts, or the eternal silence  
Breaks—save when the pealing thunder roars.

In fact, I saw no living thing in the course of my evening ramble, except a few buzzing insects. On the 2d of June they effected their object of overtaking Hunt's party, which consisted of eighty, at Cedar island, twelve hundred miles from the mouth of the river. They now formed in conjunction a fleet of five boats, and proceeded forward together.

They had now passed all the bands of the Sioux from whom they apprehended so much, and were met by the Arikaras on horseback. These Indians were friendly, and accompanied and assisted them in their progress upwards towards their villages. With Hunt's party there were two English gentlemen, at meeting with whom the author expresses great gratification. One of them by the name of Bradbury, an elderly man, was a mineralogist, the other Nuttall, a young man, was a botanist. Both of them ardent in the pursuit of their favourite science, and dilligent in the collection of specimens, though in mineralogy this region, Mr. Bradbury says, is very little interesting. The day after the junction of the boats in making an excursion, he came upon "a village of barking squirrels, or prairie dogs, as they have been called. My appraoch was announced by an incessant barking, or rather chirping, similar to that

of a common squirrel, though much louder. The village was situated on the slope of a hill, and appeared to be at least a mile in length. The holes were seldom at a greater distance from each other than twenty or thirty paces. Near each hole, there was a small elevation of earth of six or eight inches, behind which, the little animal posted himself, and never abandoned it, or ceased the demonstrations of alarm, insignificantly fierce, until I approached within a few paces. As I proceeded through the village, they disappeared one after another before me. There was never more than one at each hole. I had heard that the magpie, the Missouri rattle snake, and the horn frog, were observed to frequent these places; but I did not see any of them except the magpie. The rattle snake of the prairies, is about the same length with the common rattle snake, but more slender, and the colour white and black."

"In the course of the evening, I had an opportunity of seeing the manner in which the antelope is taken in these open plains, where there is no possibility of approaching under cover. A handkerchief is placed on the end of a ramrod, and waved in the air, the hunter lying flat on the ground. If any of the animals be in sight, they run instantly to the place, and perform a circuit round, approaching often within twenty or thirty yards, which gives an opportunity of firing on them. This is the most swift and beautiful little animal on our continent. The description of the gazel of Africa, the favourite theme of Arabian poetry, might be applied to the antelope of the Missouri. It is perhaps the most swift of all animals; and the most timid. Its course over the country is more like flight, than the movement of a quadruped. Its colour is that of the deer, but in shape bears great resemblance to the goat, though longer, and of a form much more delicate."

They proceeded upwards to the Mandan villages, and their highest point was a fort, forty miles higher, belonging to the Fur Company, Hunt here sold his boats and purchased horses to prosecute his journey by land to the Columbia. Lisa remained trading with the savages, and Mr. Brackenridge accompanied by Mr. Bradbury, took one of the boats and returned to St. Louis. They descended without effort about one hundred miles a day. We shall now select a few extracts from the journal, that the author may speak for himself.

The following is a part of his description of the Arikara nation.

“To give an account of the vices of these people, would only be to enumerate many of the most gross which prevail amongst us, with this difference, that they are practised in publick without shame. The savage state, like the rude uncultivated waste, is contemplated to most advantage at a distance. Mr. Bradbury had been an enthusiast, as most philanthropick Europeans are, on the subject of Indian manners, and I was myself not a little inclined to the same way of thinking, but now both agreed that the world would loose but little, if these people should disappear before civilized communities. In these vast plains, throughout which are scattered so many lovely spots, capable of supporting thousands such nations as the Arikara, or wandering Sioux, a few wretches are constantly roaming abroad, seeking to destroy each other. To return to the subject of their moral characters—they have amongst them their poor, their envious, their slanderers, their mean and crouching, their haughty and overbearing, their unfeeling and cruel, their weak and vulgar, their dissipated and wicked; and they have also, their brave and wise, their generous and magnanimous, their rich and hospitable, their pious and virtuous, their kind, frank, and affectionate, and in fact, all the diversity of characters that exists amongst the most refined people; but as their vices are covered by no veil of delicacy, their virtues may be regarded rather as the effect of involuntary impulse, than as the result of sentiment. In some respects they are extremely dissolute and corrupt; whether this arises from refinement in vice, or from the simplicity of nature, I cannot say; but much are they mistaken who look for primitive innocence and simplicity in what they call the state of nature. It is true, that an intercourse with the whites, never fails to render these people much worse than before; this is not by imparting any new vices, but by presenting temptations which easily overcome those good qualities, which ‘sit so loosely about them.’ Want of constancy, and uniformity of character, is the defect universally remarked with regard to the Indians, and this naturally arises from the want of fixed principles of virtue. One thing I

remarked as constituting the great difference between the savage and the civilized state, *their youth undergo no discipline*, there are no schools, and the few instructions which are given by parents, are directed only to the mere physical man, and have little to do with the mind, unless it be to inculcate fortitude and courage, or rather ferocity and thirst for blood: no genuine virtues are *cultivated* and the evil propensities of the individual are suffered to mature without correction, while he wanders about a vagabond, responsible to no one for the waste of time; like a young colt, he is considered as unfit for employment until he attains his growth. The lessons of morality are never taught either in publick or in private; at least of that morality which instructs us how to fulfil all the duties attached to our social relations, and which regard us as candidates for a future and more happy existence. Instead of such lessons of morality, the precepts first instilled into their hearts, are cruelty, murder, and rapine. The first step the young savage is taught to take, is in blood; and is it any wonder that when manhood nerves his arm, we should see him grasp the tomahawk and the scalping knife, and his savage heart thirst for blood!

“Amongst others of their customs which appeared to me singular, I observed that it was a part of their hospitality, to offer the guest, who takes up his residence in their lodges, one of the females of the family as a bedfellow; sometimes even one of their wives, daughters, or sisters, but most usually a maid-servant, according to the estimation in which the guest is held, and to decline such offer is considered as treating the host with some disrespect; notwithstanding this, if it be remarked that these favours are uniformly declined, the guest rises much higher in his esteem. Self control, in the midst of temptations which overpower the common mind, being thought, even amongst these people, to indicate a superiour character. Our common boatmen soon became objects of contempt, from their loose habits and ungovernable propensities. To these people, it seemed to me that the greater part of their females, during our stay, had become mere articles of traffick; after dusk, the plain behind our tents, was crowded with these wretches, and shocking to relate, fathers brought their daughters husbands their wives, brothers

their sisters, to be offered for sale at this market of indecency and shame. I was unable to account for this difference from any people I had ever heard of; perhaps something may be attributed to the inordinate passion which had seized them for our merchandize. The silly boatmen, in spite of the endeavours of the leaders of our parties, in a short time disposed of almost every article which they possessed, even their blankets, and shirts. One of them actually returned to the camp, one morning entirely naked, having disposed of his last shirt—this might truly be called *la derniere chemise de l'amour*.

“Seeing the chief one day in a thoughtful mood, I asked him what was the matter—‘I was wondering,’ said he, ‘whether you white people have any women amongst you.’ I assured him in the affirmative.’ ‘Then,’ said he, ‘why is it that your people are so fond of our women, one might suppose they had never seen any before?’

“This want of chastity among the Arikara was by no means universal—perhaps a more minute acquaintance with them might have enabled me to explain the phenomenon: indeed from the remains of a singular exhibition, which several of us witnessed, I was induced to believe that Diana had not altogether yielded the village to the dominion of her rival goddess. On one of their festive days, as we drew near the medicine lodge or temple, we saw in front of the entrance, or door, a number of young girls tricked out in all their finery of paint, beads, and dresses of the antelope, agalia, or deer skins, red or white, according to the taste of their wearer; the robes were richly ornamented with porcupine quills, stained of various colours, and with fringes, or borders, of silvery ermine. We observed a cedar bough fixed in the earth on the top of the lodge. Prizes of beads, vermillion, and scarlet cloth were exhibited: and the old men who live in the temple to the number of five or six, now proclaimed, as I was informed, that whosoever amongst the young girls of Arikara had preserved unsullied her virgin purity, might then ascend the temple and touch the bough, and one of the prizes would be given to her; that it was in vain to think of deceiving, for the Manitoo, or Spirit, knowing all things, even their secret thoughts, would most certainly reveal the truth; and moreover, the young men were enjoined

under the severest denunciations, to declare all that might be within their knowledge. Curiosity was now much excited. In a few moments, the daughter of the interpreter, (a Frenchman who had resided upwards of twenty years,) a beautiful girl of sixteen, came forward, but before she could ascend to touch the bough, a young fellow stepped forth, and said something, the amount of which I easily conjectured from its effect, for the young lady instantly shrunk back confused and abashed, while the surrounding crowd was convulsed with laughter. A pause ensued, which lasted for some considerable time. I began to tremble for the maidens of Arikara, when a girl of seventeen, one of the most beautiful in the village, walked forward, and asked, "where is the Arikara who can bring any accusation against me?" then touched the bough, and carried off the prize. I feel a pleasure in adding, for the honour of the ladies of Arikara, that others followed, though I did not take the trouble of noting the number."

Two of the Mandan Chiefs are thus described :

"This evening," the Mandan chief She-he-ke, who had accompanied Lewis and Clark to the United States, came to us with his wife and son, a small boy. He is a fine looking Indian, and very intelligent—his complexion fair, very little different from that of a white man much exposed to the sun. His wife had also accompanied him—has a good complexion and agreeable features. They had returned home loaded with presents, but have since fallen into disrepute from the extravagant tales which they related as to what they had witnessed; for the Mandans treat with ridicule the idea of there being a greater, or more numerous people than themselves. He is a man of a mild and gentle disposition—expressed a wish to come and live amongst the whites, and spoke sensibly of the insecurity, the ferocity of manners, and the ignorance, of the state of society in which he was placed. He is rather inclining to corpulency, a little talkative, which is regarded amongst the Indians as a great defect; add to this, his not being much celebrated as a warrior; such celebrity can alone confer authority and importance, or be regarded meritorious in this state of society."

“On the *Fourth of July*, we had something like a celebration of this glorious anniversary. The two principal chiefs happened to be with us; the *One ey'd*, and the *Black shoe*. The former is a giant in stature, and if his one eye had been placed in the middle of his forehead, he might have passed for a Cyclop. His huge limbs and gigantick frame, his bushy hair shading his coarse visage and savage features, with his one eye flashing fire, constituted him a fearful demon. He sways, with unlimited control, all these villages, and is feared by all the neighbouring nations. I remarked that on one or two occasions he treated She-he-ke, with great contempt—Lisa having referred to something said by that chief, ‘What,’ said this monster, ‘What! does that bag of lies pretend to have any authority here?’\* He is sometimes a cruel and abominable tyrant. A story was related to me of his cruelty, which has in it something of a more refined tragick nature, than we usually met with amongst these people. Having fallen in love, (for even Polyphemus felt the influence of this god, who spares neither giants nor common men,) with the wife of a young warrior, he went to his lodge during his absence, and carried her off by force. The warrior on his return, repaired to the *One ey'd* demon, and demanded his wife, but instead of receiving redress, was put to death, while the wretched object of the dispute was retained in the embraces of her ravisher. The mother of the young warrior whose only child he was, became frantick, lost her senses from excess of grief, and now does nothing but go about reviling him, and loading him with her curses: yet such is the superstitious veneration (by the by it deserves a better name on this occasion) for unhappy objects of this kind, that this chief, great as he is, dare not lay his hand on her, even should she haunt him like one of the Eumenides, wherever he may appear.

“We made several excursions to the villages below, the nearest about six miles off; but as they differ but little from those of the Arikara, I will give no particular description of them. I noticed but one thing as remarkable. About two miles on this side of the first village, my attention was attracted by a number of small scaffolds, distributed over

\* She-he-ke is a fat man, extremely talkative, and no great warrior.

several acres of ground on the slope of a hill. I soon discovered that this was a depository of the dead. The scaffolds were raised on forks about ten feet, and were sufficiently wide to contain two bodies; they were in general covered with blue and scarlet cloth, or wrapt in blankets and buffaloe robes; we did not approach near enough to examine closely, this frightful Golgotha, or place of human skeletons, but we could see a great number of valuable articles which had been left as offerings to the manes of the deceased. Several crows and magpies, were perched upon them; we could not but experience a sensation of horror, when we thought of the attraction which brought these birds to this dismal place. Some of the scaffolds, had nearly fallen down, perhaps overturned by the wind, or the effect of decay, and a great number of bones were scattered on the ground underneath. This mode of exposing the dead has something peculiarly horrible in it. The wolves of the prairie, the birds of the air, and even the Indian dogs, are attracted to the place, and taught to feed on human flesh. This custom prevails amongst all the wandering tribes; but amongst the Arikara, the dead are deposited in a grave, as with us, which I think clearly proves their origin to be different from that of their neighbours: for there is nothing, in which men in all ages and countries, have manifested more solicitude, than in the treatment of the remains of their deceased friends."

Mr. Brackenridge has once or twice described buffaloe hunts, and speaks highly of the meat of this animal, the hump of which particularly, is considered a delicious morsel. In descending the river he was witness to a fight among these animals, which must have been a scene of terrific grandeur.

"The next day we passed the Poncas village. The inhabitants had gone into the plains. In the evening when within a few miles of a point above the isle, a *Bon homme*, our ears were assailed by a murmuring noise. As we drew near it grew to tremendous roaring, such as to deafen us. On landing we discovered the grove crowded with buffaloe, the greater part engaged in furious combat—the air filled with their dreadful bellowing. A more frightful



sight cannot easily be imagined. Conceive several thousand of these furious animals, roaring and rushing upon each other, producing a scene of horror, confusion, and fierceness, like the fight of armies: the earth trembled beneath their feet, the air was deafened, and the grove was shaken with the shock of their tremendous battle. I am conscious that with many, I run the risk of being thought to indulge in romance, in consequence of this account: but with those who are informed of the astonishing number of the buffalo, it will not be considered incredible. We soon discovered that a herd of males had broken in amongst a number of females, and that these were the cause of the conflict, which raged with unparalleled fury. We fired amongst them but without producing much effect; we then embarked and proceeded on our voyage. On the hills in every direction they appeared by thousands. Late in the evening we saw an immense herd in motion along the sides of the hill, at full speed: their appearance had something in it, which, without incurring ridicule, I might call sublime—the sound of their footsteps, even at the distance of two miles, resembling the rumble of distant thunder.”

In the appendix, he gives a description by Mr. Libby, the Factor at Fort Osage, of the Grand Saline of Arkansas, a part of which follows.

“The Grand Saline is situated about two hundred and eighty miles south-west of Fort Osage, between two forks of a small branch of the Arkansas, one of which washes its southern extremity, and the other, the principal one, runs nearly parallel, within a mile of its opposite side. It is a hard level plain of reddish coloured sand, and of an irregular or mixed figure; its greatest length is from north-west, to south-east, and its circumference full thirty miles—from the appearance of driftwood that is scattered over, it would seem that the whole plain is at times inundated by the overflowing of the streams that pass near it. This plain is entirely covered in dry hot weather, from two to six inches deep, with a crust of beautiful clean white salt, of a quality rather superiour to the imported blown salt; it bears a striking resemblance to a field of brilliant snow after a rain, with a light crust on its top. On a

bright sunny morning, the appearance of this natural curiosity is highly picturesque. It possesses the quality of looming or magnifying objects, and this in a very striking degree, making the small billets of wood appear as formidable as trees. Numbers of buffaloe were on the plain. The Saline is environed by a strip of marshy prairie with a few scattering trees, mostly of cotton-wood. Behind, there is a range of sand hills, some of which are perfectly naked, others thinly clothed with verdure, and dwarf plum bushes, not more than thirty inches in height, from which we procured abundance of the most delicious plums I ever tasted. The distance to a navigable branch of the Arkansas, about eighty miles; the country tolerably level, and the water courses easily passed.

“About sixty miles south-west from this, I came to the Saline, the whole of this distance lying over a country remarkably rugged and broken, affording the most romantic and picturesque views imaginable. It is a tract of about seventy-five miles square, in which nature has displayed a great variety of the most strange and whimsical vagaries. It is an assemblage of beautiful meadows, verdant ridges, and rude mishapen piles of red clay thrown together in the utmost apparent confusion, yet, affording the most pleasing harmonies, and presenting in every direction an endless variety of curious and interesting objects. After winding along for a few miles on the high ridges, you suddenly descend an almost perpendicular declivity of rocks and clay, into a series of level fertile meadows, watered by some beautiful rivulets, and here and there adorned with shrubby cotton-trees, elms and cedars. These meadows are divided by chains formed of red clay, and huge masses of gypsum, with here and there a pyramid of gravel. One might imagine himself surrounded by the ruins of some ancient city, and that the plains had sunk by some convulsion of nature, more than one hundred feet below its former level; for some of the huge columns of red clay rise to the height of two hundred feet perpendicular, capped with rocks of gypsum, which the hand of time is ever crumbling off, and strewed in beautiful transparent flakes along the declivities of the hill, glittering like so many mirrors in the sun.”